

The MINISTERIAL DUTY *set forth.*

In an ANNIVERSARY

693. e. 5

S E R M O N

Preached before the

Univerſity of OXFORD,

ON THE

Laſt SUNDAY in *June*, 1740.

UPON

One of the Texts appointed by the late Reverend
WILLIAM MASTER, A. M.

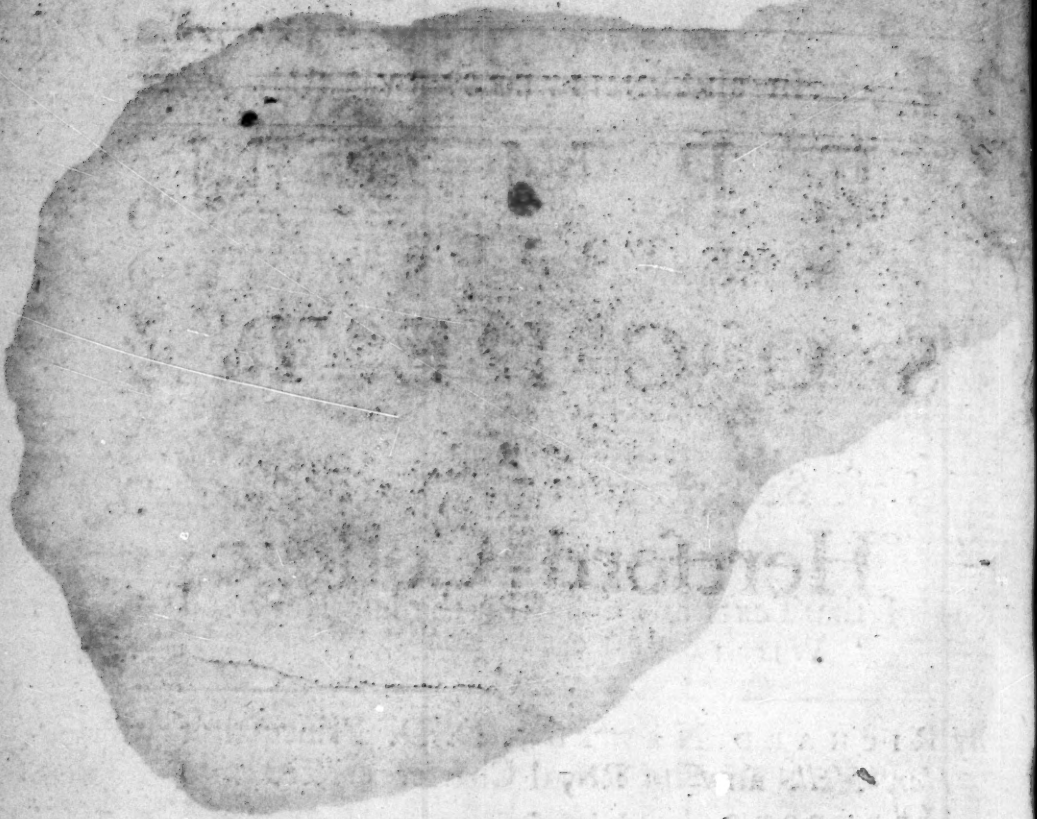
By RICHARD NEWTON, D. D. Principal of
Hart-Hall, now by Royal Charter erected into
HERTFORD-COLLEGE.

Publish'd at the Request of the VICE-CHANCELLOR,
and HEADS of HOUSES.



L O N D O N :

Printed for G. STRAHAN, in *Cornhill*; C. RIVINGTON, in *St. Paul's Church-yard*; J. OSBORN, in *Pater-noster Row*; and R. CLEMENTS, and J. FLETCHER in *Oxford*. M. DCC. XL.



TO THE
SOCIETY
OF
Hertford-College.

GENTLEMEN,

THE following Sermon setting forth the Ministerial Duty, is Printed at the Instance of the Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Houses. They have done me the Honour to be Importunate with me, beyond the Merit of the Discourse, to make it Publick, supposing it might be of Service to the University in general, whither so many resort to Qualify themselves for the Sacred Function. It is hard to say What will be of Service in an Age wherein

wherein so little Countenance is shewn to Religion or Religious Men. However, I have submitted to the Authority of their Opinion, and the rather, for that, if any Good ensue, Hertford-College (on this Day become a Society incorporate within the said University for the Education chiefly of Persons designed for Holy Orders may participate of it): For your Use the Sermon, though Preach'd before the University, was written, and to You, and to your Successors, I now inscribe it, as an Instruction from a Preceptor

Ever studious of your Improvement,

And wishing you Perpetuity,

Hertford-College,

8 Sept. 1740.

Richard Newton.

2 Tim. ii. and Part of the 24th Verse.

*The Servant of the LORD must not strive,
but be Gentle unto all Men, Apt to
Teach.*

IN treating of these Words I shall consider,

- I. *Who* is here said to be the *Servant of the Lord*, and *What* is meant by the Prohibition, "*must not strive*."
- II. I shall endeavour to shew, that, in the *Disputes* he may have, in the Course of his *Ministration*, with *serious* Men differing from him in *Opinion* about *Religious* Matters, he must be *Gentle*. And,
- III. That, with respect to those who shall at any time be committed to his Care, he must be *Apt to Teach*.

By the *Servant* of the Lord, in a large Sense, may be understood every Person who hath *Embrace'd* the Gospel, *Believes* in Jesus Christ, *Purposes* to Obey his Will, and Follow his Example. And it is true, indeed, it

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will not become *such* an One to *strive*, or be *contentious*. The several Precepts concerning *Humility*, *Meekness*, and *Charity*, given him by Christ in the Gospel, would be violated by such a Behaviour; and very little would he be thought to have learnt of *Him*, who, in so eminent a degree, was *meek* and *lowly*.

But this Epistle having been written to One who had not only *Embrac'd* the Gospel, but was appointed also to be a *Preacher* of it, makes it evident, that this Term is to be taken in a more limited Signification, and that, by the *Servant* of the Lord, we must here understand a *Preacher* of the Gospel, of what Order, Degree, or Rank soever he may be. And very ill, indeed, would it become *Him* to *strive*, or be *contentious*, whose amiable Character it is, that he is the *Messenger* of *Peace*: of *that* Peace whereby God is reconcil'd to Man; of *that* Peace, which all Christians are commanded (a) *to have one with another*.

What the particular Meaning of the Prohibition, "*Must not strive*," is, we need go no farther than the Context to learn. In the Context, ver. 23. we read, "*But foolish and unlearned Questions avoid, knowing that they do gender (b) Strifes*." And then it follows in the Text, ver. 24. "*The Servant of the Lord must not (c) strive*." When, therefore, the *Servant* of the Lord is forbidden to *strive*, ver. 24. he is then also forbidden

(a) Mark ix. 50. (b) μάχας. (c) μάχεσθαι.

to engage in *foolish* and *unlearned Questions*, or Disputes, which are said, ver. 23. to *gender Strifes*; and to be the Occasion of *Enmity* between those whom the Apostle would have to *Agree*.

What is here meant by (a) *foolish* and *unlearned Questions* or Disputes, Disputes mov'd by Persons *ignorant*, and *uninstructed* in the Christian Faith, may be learnt by comparing *This* Advice to *Timothy*, with *That* before given to *Him* and *Other Teachers*, (1 Tim. i. 4.) and here repeated.

The Advice there given is, "*That they should teach no other Doctrine,*" [than what he had deliver'd] "*neither give heed to Fables, and endless Genealogies, which minister (b) Questions, rather than godly Edifying, which is in Faith.*" Meaning by *Fables*, such *Traditions* of the *Jewish Doctors* as, clashing with the Precepts of Christianity, and making the Word of God of none effect, could have no *Truth* in them, nor were any more to be *heeded* than the pure *Inventions* of Men; and about which, therefore, the rightly *instructed* in the Faith must needs think any Questions or Disputes *foolish* and *unlearned*: And meaning by *Genealogies*, the Privileges so many valued themselves upon, (and upon which, if upon *Any* of *this* kind, they might have Reason to do so) either of a regular Descent from *David*, and, consequently, of their *Affinity* to the

(a) *μωγὴς καὶ ἀπαιδείας ἑρμηνείας.*

(b) *ἑρμηνείας.*

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Messiah; or, from *Abraham*, and so, of being the only *Visible Church* on Earth. But that any Questions or Disputes even about *These*, were also *foolish* and *unlearned*, is evident: For that, in the first Case, the *spiritual* Relation to Christ is infinitely preferable to the *natural*; and *whosoever doth the Will of his Father, which is in Heaven*, the same, he declares, (a) *to be his Brother, and Sister, and Mother*: And, in the Second, Of what use was it to any of them, either to say within themselves, or to boast to others, that they had *Abraham* to their Father, unless they had also *walked in the Steps of the* (b) *Faith of their Father Abraham*? *Abraham* saw the Day of the Christian Institution afar off, and was glad; and if his Children could not see it, when it shone directly upon them, and be glad of it too, of what Advantage was their Descent from *Him*? Or what Occasion had they to value themselves upon it? And what, naturally, could be the Consequence of giving themselves the *Preference*, where there was no *Inequality*, but Disputes? The *Partition Wall* was now broken down. The *Gospel* first propos'd to the *Jew*, was now also offer'd to the *Gentile*. And, the *Belief* and *Practice* of it being Equal, equally entitl'd the One and the Other to the Favour of God. Superiority claim'd, upon Pretensions that could not be

(a) Matth. xii. 50. (b) For they only which are of Faith [of His Faith] the same are the Children of Abraham, [or within the Promise made to Abraham and his Seed.] Gal. iii. 7. 16.

made out, would never be submitted to; and, therefore, if the *Genealogies* were not *Endless*, the *Disputes* would be. And so long as *These* should continue, mutual Love, the Badge of Christians, would be destroy'd, and a Stop put to *Edification*, or building up the Church of Christ, which then only may be said to be finish'd, when Men shall generally receive the Gospel, and, *with all Lowliness, and Meekness, and Forbearing One Another in Love*, endeavour to keep the *Unity of the Spirit*, or an Agreement in Christian Sentiments, in the *Bond of Peace*.

If the *Servant* of the Lord, then, must not strive, it is plain, He must avoid *foolish and unlearned Questions*, which *gender Strifes*.

It is a sufficient Reason, indeed, for the *Servant of the Lord*, not to enter *seriously* into the Discussion of foolish and unlearned Questions, that the doing it is altogether *unworthy* of his Character, even tho' *no Strife or Contention* should ensue. How much *more* unworthy of it, then, must it be, to labour the Proof or Disproof of Matters of *No Consequence* to Religion, with a *Strife and Contention*, which Questions of the *Greatest* cannot warrant?

Disputes which Men occasionally engage in, not in a *Polemical*, but a *Friendly* manner, for Trial of their *Skill*, or Exercise of their *Parts*, or Indulgence of their *Wit*, at a proper *Time*, and in a proper *Place*, and with Indifference to the *Issue*, are *Innocent* enough,
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however *Frivolous*, so long as *Strifes* are not thereby *Gender'd*: But since, in Disputes utterly *Insignificant*, if there be a Sollicitude for the Event, (whether That arise from *Fear* of being thought *Inferior* in the Contest, or *Mistake* about the *Moment* of it) as great *Heats* and *Animosities* in the Contenders, as flaring a *Contempt* of each others *Judgment*, as manifest a *Dislike* of each others Person, is seen to arise, as in Disputes, the Issue of which is of the last Importance, the Advice given to prevent all unnecessary *Occasion* of Strifes, the moving *foolish* and *unlearned* Questions, with the same Earnestness, as if they were Wise and Learned, is very Good. For, let what will be the *Determination*, Religion can from thence receive no *Benefit*, and, if *Strife* attend, much *Hurt*.

But, tho' the *Servant* of the Lord be forbidden to engage in *foolish* and *unlearned Questions*, the Denying or Admitting of which is a thing indifferent with respect to the Interest of Religion, yet *He* is not *Forbidden*, nay, He is *Commanded*, to defend *Important Truths*, even though it should sometimes happen, through the Infirmary of the Disputant, that *Strife* should attend his Disputation. For, though this *should* happen, as it often Hath, and often Will again, if Men will not see the greater Dignity there is in that which is *Rational* and *Decent*, than in that which is *Contumelious* and *Ridiculous*; and the *Clerical* Character of particular Disputants

putants be thereby lessen'd; and Christian Religion defended by Men who are too proud of their Abilities, and have no Command of their Passions, be, so far, for the present, *Dis-serv'd*; yet the *Importance* of the Disputes, if *momentous Truth* be thereby establish'd, will, in point of *Service* to Religion, be an *Over-balance*: Since the *Important Truth* once establish'd will remain, when the *Contenders* shall be no more.

But, since Religion is capable of being thought less well of in *any* degree, for any indiscreet, or intemperate Zeal in its Defenders, the *Servant* of the Lord, even in the Defence of *Important Truths*, is still forbidden to *strive*, or to be *contentious*, in the same Sense, in which *Strife* and *Contention* are suppos'd to attend Disputes of no Consequence to Religion.

Not *Disputes*, then, but the *Vices* incident to Disputes, are forbidden. Now *Contention* is a Vice incident to Disputation. The *Contender*, whilst he pretends to be searching after *Truth*, is seeking *Victory*, and, by *Victory*, *Glory*: Whence the Greeks call *Contention* φιλονεικίαν, or the Love of Victory in the Dispute, the *Concomitants* of which are the Conceit of *Parts*, the Pride of *Learning*, Impatience of *Contradiction*, a tumultuous and disorderly *Process* in the Argumentation, *Asperity*, *Insult*, *Triumph*, *Reproaches*, *Abuses*, *Contumelies*, which proceed from a vicious Earnestness to get the better; and are all nothing

thing to the Purpose; forasmuch as *Truth*, pretended to be sought after, must stand or fall by the *Evidence* that appears for or against it, which by the *Dust* the Contenders have rais'd about it is *obscur'd*, and can never be *clearly seen* till *that* is settled.

Supposing, then, the *Servant* of the Lord to be engag'd in Disputes with *serious* Men, differing from him in Opinion about Religious Matters, *He* must not, in his Defending what he thinks to be *Important Truth*, be *Contentious*, but *Gentle*; which is the

II^d Thing I propos'd to consider.

Very *Learned* and very *Good* Men have been often disappointed of the *Proper* and *Desireable* Fruit of their Labours, when, through *Prejudice* or *Passion*, they have departed from the *Gentleness* recommended in the Text, whether in their *Conversation* or *Writings*. The *Service* they have *Intended*, and have been *Able* to do their Master, hath not been done. It is well if the *Cause* of their Master, under their Conduct and Management hath not been *Hurt*. If therefore this *Gentleness* be not in the *Temper*, it must be in the *Discretion* of the *Servant*. The *Appearance* and *Opinion* of it is necessary to the Purpose of doing *Service*. It is an *Art* that must be learnt. It is a *Character* that must be assum'd. Where-ever there is such a Behaviour, as that, for the Good that may be
done

done by it, *Gentleness* shall be thought *really* to be, where *naturally* it is not, there is a most virtuous *Dissimulation*.

I deny not, but that there may, occasionally, be some Difficulty in it, arising either from the *Temper* of the *Servant*, or the *Waywardness* of *Those*, with whom, in the Course of his *Ministration*, he must converse: but, so there may in the Exercise of any *Other* Virtue, till the Consideration of the *Reason* of the Thing, *Habitual Practice*, and certain *Conquests*, reviewed with Pleasure, have assur'd us, that it is not only a *Superable* Task, but an *Agreeable* and *Useful* Exercise.

But, were the Difficulty found to be *Insuperable* by the *Servant*, after He should have taken true Pains with Himself to *Conquer* it, yet this would still be the Consequence, that, though, according to the Pains he had taken, he would be the *Better Man*, yet, in the same degree, in which he should have fail'd of Success, he would be a *Deficient Servant*. For, towards those who *Differ* from him in Opinion, is *Gentleness* especially requir'd; there being no *Other* way by which they will submit to be *Approach'd*. There is no *Room* for him to exercise *this Virtue* towards those with whom he *Agrees*. For, towards *those* All Men are *Gentle*, even such as are not of a *Gentle Nature*.

I need not say, that the *less* Prepar'd we are to engage in Disputes with Others, who *seem* to differ from us, the *more* Gentle we should

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be. For, if we have not well consider'd the *Subject* of Difference, we may not, for the present, be *Certain*, Whether they *Do* differ from us or no. And very precipitate, absurd, and unseemly would it be indeed, to shew any Dislike, much more any Contempt of Persons *for Varying* from us in their Opinions, when they do *not Vary*; or, if they do, whilst we are *Unprepared* to shew them wherein they Err.

But, if the *Servant* of the Lord be never so *well prepar'd* to Explain and Establish the Precepts and Doctrines of the Gospel, and to Convince Men of their Departures from the Truth, as it is in *Christ Jesus*, and doth Intend this earnestly, as a Matter of the greatest Importance to them, yet, in Prudence, he will not do it in a Way likely to defeat his Own *Design*.

He will only say, what he hath to say, in Terms *plain* and *explicit*; and with a View fully to *Inform*, and as *Often* as there shall seem to be *Occasion*; and at a *Season* most likely to have *Effect*; and in a *Manner* least likely to *Offend*.

Whether what he shall instruct them in, or persuade them to, will be duly *Regarded*, depends no further on the *Servant*, than that he be careful there be nothing in His *Conduct* towards them, that may incline them to *Disregard* it.

This Point being secur'd, the *Servant* of the Lord hath done all that a *Servant* can do.
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The *Master* can do more, indeed, and will do more, if Men are in good earnest Desirous to *Know* the Truth, and to *Believe* and *Live* according to it. He will *Enlighten* their Understandings. He will *Incline* their Wills. His *Grace* will be sufficient for them. But the *Servant* of the Lord must not *strive* in a manner *unbecoming* a Servant. He is intrusted with a *Message*. All that is requir'd of *Him* is, that He be found *Faithful* in *Delivering* it. If there be any Doubt about the *Meaning* of it, He can only relate how *He himself* understands it, and Argue how reasonable it is, that *Others* should so understand it too.

If they do not immediately *comprehend* him, if they are *slow* in collecting the Force of his Arguments, He is not to be *Impatient*; He is not to upbraid them with *Stupidity* in not *seeing* this Force, or with *Disingenuity* in not *Owning* it; Imputations, whilst what is imputed is uncertain, at once *unmannerly* and *uncharitable*, and, if True, *unnecessary*. They will look upon such a Procedure as a Degree of *Violence* intended to *Awe* them into a *Resignation* of their present Persuasions, to *Compel* them to an implicit *Submission* to *His* Opinion, and to extort from them the *Liberty* they have to Judge for themselves, which implies *Incompetency* to do it.

But, hardly is there a Man, who, in point of Sense, views himself in so disadvantageous a Light, as to consider himself of *no* kind of

Value, nor worthy of any the *least* Regard, Self-love, universally implanted in human Nature, will not suffer him to do this. If he could do it, he would be, in a good degree Unhappy. He would be as often out of Humour with himself, as He should *think* of it; and we may therefore conclude, He will be as often out of Humour with others, as they shall *appear* to think this *of* him. That which distinguishes *Men* from *Brutes* being their *Reason*, and that which distinguishes *Men* from *Men*, being their *Superior Reason*, a Good *Understanding* is of so high a Price, that last of all will *Any* be brought to yield that they have it not, at least, in Matters that have lain in their *Way* to *Consider*, in Matters that are *Propos'd* to their *Consideration*; which very Proposal being an *Appeal* to their *Understanding*, supposes them to have it. And He who shall undervalue it in *Others*, will be thought *Himself* not to have it, and, accordingly be disregarded in what he hath to *offer* as the *Result* of it.

Hence it is that so many Exhortations are given in Scripture to behave in such a manner as not to give Offence by the *Diminution* of it in *Any*, since, naturally, Men will have the better *Opinion* of any One, the *better* He shall seem to have of their *Understanding*.

Hence arises the *Sin*, and the *Danger*, in our Saviour's Estimate, to Him who shall say to his Brother, *Thou Fool*: Forasmuch as this cannot be said without betraying so much

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Displeasure against him, and so much *Ill-Will* to him, and so much *Contempt* of him, as will naturally be follow'd by reciprocal *Disinclination* and *Disaffection*, and an utter *Refusal* to be Guided or Directed by *Him*, let his Talents for *Conviction* or *Reformation* be what they will.

But, in how *slender* a degree soever any Man hath *Understanding*, yet, if He think it *sufficient* to Guide him, he must be at Liberty to make *Use* of it, and, if He pleases, to *Rely* upon it. If, thinking it *Incompetent* for the Purpose, He will follow the Judgment of *Another*, He will still think he hath *Understanding* enough to choose *Whose* Judgment he shall follow. He will not follow *His*, to be sure, who, he thinks, doth not *use* him *well*: Nor will he ever believe he is *so* deficient in Understanding, as not to know *when* he is well used.

Any kind of *Force*, which the Servant of the Lord shall attempt to use in order to bring Men over to his different Opinion, besides that of the *Reason* of the thing, (which to Rational Creatures is *Cogency* sufficient, at least for the *Acknowledgment* of the Truth, if not for the *Practice* of it) will always meet with *Opposition* where Men can be *safe*, and *Compliance* in *Appearance* only where they cannot. Nor can it possibly be otherwise. For though Men may be forc'd to *Do* as he would have them *do*, yet they cannot be forc'd to *Think* as he would have them *think*.

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think. They cannot, often, *Think* as they would themselves. The easiest and most natural way of inducing them to *Think* as he would have them, is, to *Behave*, in the general, towards *All Mankind*, and towards *Those*, in particular, whose Notions he would rectify, in such a manner, as that they may, in the first place, *Think well* of *Him*. For, in the Errors, from which he proposes to Reform them, they follow *Leaders* whom they *do* think well of, and *therefore* follow them.

If the *Reason* of the thing be at any time *insufficient*, it is either because the *Weight* of it is not discern'd; or that Men are prejudic'd in favour of *Earlier* Institutions; or in Disfavour to the *Reasoner*, who would induce other Sentiments. In all which Cases it is evident how necessary it is that Those, whom we would *Convince*, should have a good Opinion of us. For, where the *Reason* of the thing is not discern'd, a good *Opinion* of the *Reasoner* is in the *room* of Reason, and is *That* alone which *Persuades*. Where there is a *Prejudice* in favour of earlier Institutions, the Reasoner must take his *Chance*. But he will have a *better* Chance if there be not also a Prejudice in Disfavour of *Him*; and a better *still*, if his *Amiable* Qualities have conciliated Favour to him. For, where there is *ill Opinion*, or *Disaffection*, it extinguishes the Desire, if not to *Learn*, yet to Learn of *Him*. They will not so much as Approach
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to the *Place* of Hearing what he hath to say. Or, if they do, it is, probably, with Hopes of finding something *Amis* in what he says. Or, if they are so far convinc'd that they cannot themselves *Refute* what is said, yet they will suspect that still it *may* be Refuted. *Non Persuadebis, etiamsi Persuaseris.*

Were the Minds of Persons to be taught *in equilibrio*; were they *indifferent* to these or other Tenets in Religion; and wanted only to receive *Inclination* from Conviction, yet still the Argument made use of for this Purpose would abate of its Force, if there was *Disaffection* to the Proposer of it.

But, Multitudes are found to be *already* in a Way of Worshipping and Serving God agreeable to early Institutions, and the Examples of their Ancestors. Be this a *wrong* Way, yet still they have been led into it from their Infancy, and have therein continu'd, through the *Esteem* and *Affection* they have had for those who have preceded and guided them in it. Here is then a *Prejudice* to be gotten over: a Difficulty which the *Servant* of the Lord, preserving Mens good *Opinion* of him, and intreating the Assistance of his Master, may *hope* to surmount; but neglecting his *proper Character*, and thereby creating *another* Prejudice, must for ever *despair* of doing.

Whoever, then, shall offer to shew *these* Men a *better* Path, must, besides his *Reasoning* clearly upon it, free them from all kind
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of Apprehension, as to the *manner of Spirit* he *is of*. He must create in them an Opinion of *Gentleness, Goodness, Meekness* in *Himself*; and of his *good Will* towards *Them*; that he would not for any Consideration *Misguide* them; that he walks *uprightly* in this Path himself, without any Deviation from it; that he hath no other View in pointing it out to them, but the *Discharge* of his *Commission* to shew it, and the *Safety*, he is persuaded they will find in it; that, however, be it never so safe in the Judgment *He* forms of it, yet, he doth not take upon him to *Compel* Men to go into it; that he only *Invites*, and *Exhorts*, and earnestly *Intreats*, that they would do so; but that whether they *will* or no, he will Acquiesce in having deliver'd his Message to them; and that whether they *shall* or no, he will live in Amity with them, and do good Offices to them, and receive good Offices from them, just as he would do, if *They* believ'd in all things just as *He* did.

It is not sufficient, then, for the *Conviction* or *Reformation* of others, that the Preacher hath *Learning* and *Eloquence*, Qualities which Men *Admire*, if he have not *Those* also which Men *Love*. Where these unite with the proper Powers to *Teach* and to *Persuade*, there is great *Opinion*, great *Affection*, and the certain Consequence of these, Great *Authority*.

Whom we thus *Gently* approach we shall find more *Teachable* as well as more *Tractable*.

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They will not only more easily submit to be *Convers'd* with, but they will listen to us also with a closer *Attention*, what we say will be allow'd fuller *Consideration*, gain' readier *Admission*, make a deeper *Impression*. They will the sooner be inclin'd to *Think* in Religious Matters as we do, when they find this *Fruit* of Our Religion. Nor shall we have advanc'd a little way towards *Convincing* those who Differ from us, when once we shall have gain'd their *Inclination* to Agree with us.

Whereas *Ungentleness* will have the Appearance of *Enmity*. After which, all Applications to them, under Pretence of having in View their Temporal and Eternal Good, (great Motive to Attention where it is believ'd) will be in vain. For, they will say to us, You are *Not* believ'd. It is not usual for an Enemy to *Intend* Good. You are suspected of *Design*, and of *Impatience* to accomplish it. We are apprehensive you want only to Increase your *Party*. And we are already apprisd, that even *False* Teachers will compass Sea and Land, in order to gain even *One* Profelyte. In your *Manner* of Convincing us you seem to intend to Reproach us, and to Shame us, to Insult and Triumph over us, and to Expose us to Derision and Abuse. You are Angry with us for what we cannot Help. And, often, having Mistaken us, you Misrepresent us. And though, in Inquiries after Truth, there is no more room for *Wit*, than there is for *Resentment*, yet you are *Witty* upon us, or *Aim* to

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be so at least, (shrewd Sign of Contempt!) and exasperate us by the Delight you seem to take in being so. How justly, therefore, may we Answer you in the Words of holy *Job*, to his indiscreet Friends, "*How forcible are RIGHT Words! but what doth YOUR Arguing Reprove?*".

I come now, in the *Third* and Last Place, to shew, That the *Servant* of the *Lord*, with respect to those who are committed to his Care, must be *Apt* to *Teach*.

Aptness to *Teach* implies, first a *Disposition*, or Readiness in the Person to Teach, who is here advis'd to be *Apt*; And, Secondly, his *Fitness* to do it, or his *Qualifications* for the Office in *Other* respects.

The *Disposition* he hath to enter into the *Clerical* Office, founded in his *Liking* the *Profession*, and his *Preferring* it to any *Other*; and in a *Consciousness* that He hath the proper *Powers* to be Useful in it; and in a *Persuasion* that he shall apply himself to the Discharge of the several Duties of it with *Pleasure*, is the True *Disposition* to *Teach*, or the True *Genius* to the *Profession*: and what, as I apprehend, the Church, in the *Ordination* Office, terms, "*A being INWARDLY MOV'D by the HOLY GHOST to take upon him this Office and Ministration;*" and again, "*A being CALL'D to the Ministry of the Church according to the Will of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" For this *Disposition* so founded,
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this *Genius* to the Profession, is not only the *Gift* of the *Holy Ghost*, but a secret *Intimation* also, or *Monition*, or *Direction* from the *Holy Ghost*, that being thus Dispos'd, Prepar'd, and Fitted to promote the Glory of God, and the Edifying of his People by *Teaching*, he should take upon him *That* Employment.

But a bare *Disposition* to Teach, is not a *Motion* from the *Holy Ghost*; a bare *Inclination* to it, is not a *Call* to the Ministry, without proper *Powers*, or *Aptnesses*, or *Fitnesses*, or *Qualifications* for it, in *Other* Respects, any more than the *Plebeian's Inclination* to become a Philosopher, upon his having heard *Socrates* speak divinely, is a *Genius* to Philosophy.

These *Fitnesses*, or *Qualifications* to Teach, are,

Knowledge of Letters.

Sanctity of Life.

Diligence in Duty.

Prudence in Conduct.

1. *Knowledge of Letters.* The State of the Church upon Earth is *Militant*, always in *Danger*, often in *Distress*. Whether the Enemy She is afraid of be either *Spiritual* or *Carnal*, it is fit She should be upon her *Guard*, in a *Posture* of Defence, in a *Readiness* to contend for the Faith once deliver'd unto the Saints, and, though *Preferring* Peace, yet *Prepar'd* for War.

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Learning, with *Skill* to make use of it, in those who wait at her Altars, is the *Armour* in which She Trusts, though not the *Whole* *Armour* necessary for the *Christian* Warfare. By these *Weapons*, however, she is to be *Supported* in the *Belief* of the Doctrines, and in the *Practice* of the Duties of the Religion she hath espous'd. And the Church can no more be said to be in a prosperous Condition without this *Aid*, than a Kingdom liable to be *Divided* within itself, or *Invaded* by a foreign Enemy, without Military Force directed by Wise Counsel.

But unless *These* so necessary Endowments be accompanied with *Others*, as necessary to her Safety, these *Alone* will not be sufficient to *protect* her. For if what *Service* Men Do her by their *Parts* and *Learning*, they Undo by *Failures* in their Moral Character, the *Merit* is over-balance'd by the *Demerit*. The Cause that was *Defended* is *Betray'd*. The Argument that cannot be *Disprov'd*, is, however, *Suspected*. Here is the *Repute* of Learning to the *Men*, but not the *Benefit* of it to the *Church*. Therefore,

2. *Sanctity* of Life is *Another* Qualification fitting and enabling the *Servant* of the Lord to *Teach*.

This includes, in the Notion of it, All that Religion and Virtue, which the *Clerical* Order is instituted to promote.

That

That Men of *this* Order have *separated* themselves from all *Other* Employments, and *Devoted* themselves *wholly* to the Promoting of *Religion* and *Virtue* amongst Men, is Sanctity of *Character*. If Sanctity of *Life* answer *this* Character, they are, in this Respect, excellently *Qualified* for the promoting of Religion and Virtue amongst Men. For, so far, they will be Belov'd, Respected, Rever'd; so far will they restrain many from the *Commission* of Sin, at least, in their *Sight*, or that may come to their *Knowledge*; so far will they *Countenance* many in the Practice of Virtue, and *Invite* many to an Imitation of those Virtues which in them appear so lovely; so far will they be prepar'd occasionally to Reprove, Rebuke, and Exhort with greater Authority, and without any Misgiving of Heart that it will be said to any of them, "*Thou, that teachest Another, Teachest thou not Thyself?*"

But even *This* Fitness to Teach, is not, *Alone*, sufficient, without the *Former* Qualification, especially in an Age so Inquisitive, so Penetrating, and so *Contending*, that what is *said* to be True, should *be* False. So that, if there be a *Want* of Proper Learning; if what they would induce a *Belief* and *Practice* of, they cannot set in such a Light, as that the same shall appear *Credible* and *Reasonable*, they may be in danger of having it imputed to them, that *Ignorance* is indeed the Mother of *THEIR* Devotion. *Alterius sic Altera poscit opem Res.*

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3. If, with *these* Preparations to Teach in the best manner, there be yet a Want of *Diligence* in the Performance of this Duty; If the Parts, and Learning, and Eloquence of the Clergy, are *Unemploy'd*, or *Otherwise Employ'd*, than in Promoting Religion and Virtue; If Sanctity of Life be *Recluse*; If so chearing a Light *shine not* before Men, that they may behold it, and be Led and Guided by it into every good Path; If there be not a *Watchfulness* to give Notice of the Approach of Danger to those committed to their Care; a *Concern* lest they should Incur it; a *Solicitude* to Redeem them from it, if haply they shall have fallen into it; and seasonable *Instruction* how to avoid it for the future; there will not be in the *Servant* of the Lord that *Aptness* to Teach, which his *Master* doth Intend and Require there should.

Those who enter into *Holy Orders* accept a *Trust*; and, without *Diligence* in Duty, do not Answer the *Confidence* repos'd in them, are not Faithful, are not Just, are not Honest. There is a *Work*, and there are *Wages*; and the Wages are *for* the Work. If it be true, that *the Labourer is worthy of his Hire*, it is not less true, that the *Hire* is worthy of a *Labourer*. And if, in the Opinion of the Labourer, the Hire, at any time, be but *Small*, yet the *Duty* is not therefore to be done *Negligently*. The Duty is such, as that the Present and Future Happiness of Multitudes depends on it's being *Well* perform'd. The Hire, though small, is *Accepted*. Diligence was
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Presum'd. Otherwise *Another* would have been employ'd. He hath no *Other* Employment, and cannot therefore want *Leisure* to do the Duties of *This* in the best manner.

4. *Prudence* in *Conduct* may well be reckon'd a Qualification to Teach, since *This* is the great Security that any *Other* shall be of Use.

Diligence, if not under the Direction of *Prudence*, may Intrude, be Officious, Unseasonable, Offensive. The *Diligent* hath an End in View. Such Steps only are to be taken as Conduce to it. *Intempestivity* is Diligence to *Prevent* what he aims to Accomplish. If he would reclaim the Sinner, and think *Admonition* proper for this Purpose, he will consider also what *Opportunity* is proper; and what *Manner* of Address is proper. His Intention is to *Gain* his Brother. If his Brother will *hear* him, he *will* have gain'd his Brother. That his Brother *may* hear him, he will consider his *Temper*, his *Condition* in the World, his *Age*, the *Time*, the *Place*. As *These* differ, the *Application*, in Prudence, will be different.

In like manner, *Parts*, and *Learning*, and *Eloquence* applied to Reform from *Vice*, no less than to Convince of *Error*, will fail of the Regard Men should have for these excellent Endowments, and, consequently, of their proper Influence, if the Argument we use for this Purpose be accompanied with personal *Reflections* on occasion of personal *Misunderstandings*,

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standings, or with Expressions of *Asperity* towards any *Sect* or *Party* differing from us in Notions whether *Religious* or *Political*. For, in these Cases, the Audience will only be instructed with whom the Preacher is *Displeas'd*. The *Duty* that was to have been *inforc'd* is left to shift for itself. Here is a *Weakness* crept into the Argument which is taken special *Notice* of, and the *Strength* of it is *Overlook'd*. All that the Preacher shall say of Duty, intermix'd as it is with *foreign*, and especially with *offensive* Matter, will go for nothing. The Affair of *Duty*, What Men ought to *Believe* and *Do*, was the *Preacher's Only* Concern. If *He* appear, not to be concern'd about *This*, or not sufficiently, (as he will, if he be concern'd about any thing else) neither probably will the *Hearer*. The *Hearer* may suppose the Preacher to be the best Judge, what is of the greatest *Importance*. Nor ought any One to be surpris'd if his *Attention* should be chiefly to *That* which was chiefly design'd for his Entertainment; or, if *This* should be *All* that he will *Remember*; or, if this should not Improve him in Christian Knowledge, but be Matter of *Amusement* only, if he was *Untouch'd*, or, of *Resentment*, if *Hurt*. Through his *Imprudence* He is the Occasion that his Valuable Talents shall be of no Use towards the Attainment of the very End he pretends to be in Pursuit of: whereas Reasoning upon the proper Subject of Discourse with *Dignity*, with *Solidity*, with *Prspicuity*, with *Ingenuity* and
Candor,

Candor, might have had Force insuperable, and not have created in any One any Prejudice against the Truth, any Disinclination to acknowledge it. But *Religion* and *Virtue* are not likely to be promoted by a Conduct in the *Writer* or *Preacher*, that is Itself a *Departure* from Religion and Virtue.

In like manner *Sanctity of Life*, however founded in Conviction of the absolute Necessity of it in *Clerical Men*, to the saving their Own Souls, and the Souls of those that Hear them, may yet, by failures in *Prudence*, fail Itself of *Respect*, and consequently of *Influence*.

To *Be Good*, and to be *Satisfied* of one's Own Sincerity, is not sufficient. There will be a failure in *Prudence*, if this do not *Appear* also, and be not *Believ'd* to be what it appears. To be *Really* good, is primarily necessary to preserve the *Appearance* of Goodness. For, otherwise, *This* cannot be long maintain'd. For *Simulation* will sometimes forget that She is acting a Part. This Foundation being once laid, that, in *Prudence*, is to be done, which will make it *Credible*, and that, in *Prudence*, forborn, which may render it *Suspected*.

Where *True* Goodness is, no Pains are necessary to make it *Appear*, or be *Believ'd*. The uniform Tenor of Life and Conversation will shew it. The Care which, in *Prudence*, Men are to take, is, that *Affectations*, *Ostentations*, *Austerities*, *Levities*, *Want* of *Temper*, do not intermix with *Sanctity* of Life, and contribute to its *Disappearing*, or occasion it to be *Dis-*
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believ'd, and, consequently, to fail of the *desir'd Influence* in Teaching.

By AFFECTATION it will fail. For *Affectation*, being a Departure from what is *Simple* and *Natural*, is always *mistrusted*. Accordingly, Examples have been set by Men of *Affected*, or *Constitutional* Piety, (which will always *appear* to be *Affected*) which Sober, Wise, and Virtuous Men have not thought it *Necessary* to Imitate; which many, despairing to Reach, have given over the Pursuit of, and fallen short even of that Degree of Goodness they might have attain'd; which, after having astonish'd the Ignorant, and Assembled the Curious in Multitudes for a while, have, in the end, serv'd only to *Distress* scrupulous and tender Minds with a Doubtfulness of their State, and to *Reproach* Good Men with Deficiencies they cannot supply; and which Human Frailty in themselves hath often shewn to be Examples far from being *Perfect* and *Exact*.

What was gain'd to the Credit and Interest of True Religion by the Affectations of *Purity*, a Century ago, beyond what any One in his Senses could think Needful, or Practicable, or believe to be founded in *Real* Goodness, of which he perceiv'd not the *least* Fruit?

The *Dissolute*, who saw through the Hypocrisy of those Times, comforted themselves with supposing, that all Pretences to Piety and Goodness were no better founded than in Views of private Ends; whilst *Others* of a better Mind, resolving to keep as far from all *Affectation*

tation as was possible, were shy of *Appearing Openly* to be so Good as they *really* were; whereby Religion lost its *Proper Countenance*.

And again, What is gain'd to the Credit and Interest of True Religion, in the present Age, by *Affectations* of extraordinary *Sanctity*, the *Result*, as is pretended, of *Instantaneous Regeneration*? Men are taught to attend to a sudden *Impulse* of the Spirit, by which the *New Birth* is wrought; which, however, is not so describ'd, as that any Man Living can discern, whether he *Feel* it or no; and yet it is made of such Importance to Salvation, that, be it at the *Peril* of his *Soul*, if He *Feel* it not.

The Natural Consequence of which is, That many will Believe, or Hope, or Fausy, or Flatter themselves, that they *Do* feel this *Impulse*, in order to get rid of the Terror of Damnation (for there is a sort of *Elasticity*, if I may so call it, in Human Nature, which, upon every Pressure, endeavours to recover itself into the former State of Ease and Tranquillity); whilst Others, who feel nothing of it, (not having *Spring* enough for this Purpose) are overwhelm'd with the Perplexity and Horror consequent upon their Belief, that inevitable Ruin is their Doom.

Much more *Apt to Teach* is He, who calls not upon Men *already born* of Water and of the Holy Ghost, according to the Institution of our Blessed Saviour, to be *born again* by an *Impulse*, or *Inward Feeling*, or what shall be Interpreted by themselves to be so; but Diligently to *Read* the Scriptures; and to *Observe*

what is therein Commanded or Forbidden; and to be *Careful* to Do the One, and to Forbear the Other; and if, through *Ignorance*, or *Inadvertence*, or *Surprize*, or *Strength of Passion*, there be Departures from this sure Rule of Life, to lament them, and to be more *Watchful* over their Conduct for the future; and to beg of God to assist them to do his Will. But if any think they have found a nearer way to Salvation, I cannot say they are *not Persuaded* of it. To their *Own Master* they must *stand*, or *fall*.

But not only *Affectation* of greater Sanctity than can consist with the *Frailties* of Human Nature, but OSTENTATION of that Degree of it which in this Life is *Attainable*, and Matter of *Duty*, is such a *Failure* in *Prudence* in the Teacher, that he shall have less *Influence*, and, consequently, be less *Apt* to *Teach*.

For, *Ostentation* is a kind of *Force* us'd towards Men to *Oblige* them to see Our *Virtues*; which, otherwise they would readily enough have seen, but which, when *Obtruded* upon them to be taken notice of, make them sharp-sighted and inquisitive into Our *Defects*. They begin to apprehend, that a *Diminution* of every thing Good in *Themselves* is Intended, and that their *Own Virtues* are to be *extinguish'd* by this superior Glare; and from hence grow *Peevish* and *Disinclin'd* to allow that Goodness in us, which, if it had been more *Modest* and *Reserv'd*, would not have been less *Seen*, and much more *Admir'd*, and have affected the

Hearts

Hearts of Men with greater Desire of attaining like Excellence: and indeed with Reason; for where there is a *Vanity*, and a fond *Conceit* of Goodness, there IS less Goodness. For there are such *Abatements* to be made in the Estimate of the Goodness of the best Men, that a Man cannot be *Conceited* of his Goodness and *Be Good*; nor, consequently, *Appear* to be Conceited, and *Appear* to be Good.

Again, AUSTERITY in the Teacher, whether this appear in *Unnecessary* Severities towards Himself, or *Heavy* Impositions on Others *Grievous to be born*, is a *Failure* in *Prudence*, if his Design be to Profelyte Men to Christianity. My *Toak*, saith our Saviour, is *Easy*, and My *Burthen* is *Light*. My *Ways*, saith Wisdom, are *Ways of Pleasantness*, and My *Paths* are *Peace*. The Service of God is not a *Whimsical*, but a *Reasonable* Service. It is a Service that is *perfect Freedom*, when uncumbred with *Strictnesses* that are not founded in *Religion*, but in *Mistakes* about Religion. Even *Self-denial*, the great Characteristick of the *Christian*, is *Abstinence* from that only which will *Hurt*. Not *Suffering*, but the *Effects* of Suffering, constitute the Christian; and therefore Sufferings are no longer *Good*, than they *Produce* Good.

However, therefore, Men may have been *scar'd* by Misrepresentations, there is nothing *frightful* in Religion. A dark, gloomy, severe, dejected Countenance may be the *Countenance* of Men Low-spirited, Ignorant, or Affected;

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fected; but is not *That* of Religion. Religion, Viewed at a proper Point of Sight, hath a very *Beautiful* Face. It is *Innocent*, and very *Careful* not to *Hurt* any body; or, doing it inadvertently, is *Uneasy* till it hath made him *Amends*. It always *Means* well, and *Does* as well as ever it can. If it Offends, it wants to be *Reconcil'd*; *Confesses* its Fault; *Prays* to be Forgiven; is desirous to be *Inform'd*; is less *Adventurous*; more *Circumspect*; Sensible of its Own Frailty; Forgives every body; Abounds in Good-will; Delights in Good-offices; keeps itself clean; Is *Pleas'd* with itself; *Looks* Chearful; *Is* chearful. Why then will any One be so *Indiscreet*, as to dress this *Lovely* Form in such a *Frightful* Manner, as to *Terrify* the Beholder, instead of *Inviting* him to embrace it?

But if *Austerities* are Imprudent, as they discourage Men from entring upon a Religious Course of Life, *LEVITIES* are not less so, as they tempt Men to think there is no Need to be *Serious*, even in *Serious Matters*.

For, since to *Promote* Religion is what *Clerical* Men professedly undertake; and since they cannot more *Effectually* promote it, than by Securing an Opinion in Those, whom they would have to be Religious, that they have nothing so much at heart, What can be more *Aliene* to their Design, than to give Men *Opportunities* to observe, that their Attention is, in a manner wholly, taken off from this *One Thing Needful*, and set upon *Levities* of various

rious Kinds, which, if *Innocent* in themselves, yet, hurting the *Clerical* Character, and weakening their *Credit* and *Influence*, are not *So* in *Them*?

It is not *Impossible* indeed, but that a *Clergyman* in a fanciful affected *Dress*, manifestly shewing with what *Reluctance* he departs from the *Lay* Habit, and accedes to the *Clerical*, as if he hoped to be still *Undistinguish'd*; and, pursuing *Sports* and *Pastimes* with a keener Appetite than could become even *That* Part of the *Laity* that would be thought to be Men of any *Business*; and so far receding from the *Dignity* of his *Office*, as to be *Delighted*, or at least *not* to be *Displeas'd*, with Conversation that must offend every one *Intending*, and especially *Professing* to intend, the Promotion of *Piety* and *Virtue*; and Associating Himself to *Inferior* Persons of no *Education*, whether as *Assistants* in Ordinary Diversions, or as *Partisans* in Private Schemes, and especially if they are Men of *Irreligious* or *Immoral* Lives, which must here be *Overlook'd*, or dispens'd with *Unreprov'd*: I say, it is not *Impossible* but that such a Clergyman may be *Able* to satisfy the Doubts of the *Scrupulous* Christian, and set his poor, trembling Heart at *Rest*: But, for all this, he will not generally be *Thought* to be so; or, if he Should, yet Few will Adventure to *Open* themselves to him with any *Confidence* that he is *Fit* to be *Trusted* with what they have to say.

But, were it true, that *Illiterate* Men *Misjudg'd* of these Matters, yet if *Their* good
Opinion

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Opinion of him be *necessary* to his having Sufficient Authority with them to direct and guide them in the Paths of *Holiness* and *Virtue*, he must abridge himself of these *Liberties*, however *Innocent*, since they are *Unnecessary*, rather than give such *Offence*, as will make his Ministry amongst them of no Use. But let him be assured, there can, here, be no *Mistake*. The *Learned* and *Illiterate* are both of the same Opinion.

The Last Thing I shall mention as *Lessening* Opinion of Sanctity, and Influence in Teaching, and, consequently, as *Imprudent*, is WANT of TEMPER.

That *Impatience* or *Want* of *Temper* in the Management of *Religious Disputes* is a failure in *Prudence*, hath already appeared, and Experience sufficiently shews, that It is not less so in *General Conduct*.

I do not say, that, To be *Angry*, simply consider'd, is a Diminution of the *Clerical* Character: For *Anger*, like all Other Passions, is implanted in Human Nature by the Creator for Wise and Good Purposes. *Be ye Angry, and Sin not*, supposes that a Man may be *Angry*, and yet *Innocent*. Nay, whenever *Displeasure* shewn in a proper *Degree*, and proper *Manner*, would Prevent the *Mischief*, or the *Sin* from being repeated, *Not* to be *Angry*, would *Not* be *Innocent*. *Anger* properly exerted, is a very Fine Passion, and is often rightly *counterfeited* for the Service that may be done by the *Apprehension* of it, whilst

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it is thought to be *Real*. *Anger* is the very *Passion* which chiefly keeps the World in *Awe*, so far as it is kept in *Awe*. What are the best Laws that have ever been made, but the *Effects* of the *Anger* of the Legislature? And what is it that hinders the *Execution* of the best Laws, but the *Indolence*, and *Insensibility*, and *Semperlenity*, and *Dead Calmness* of Temper, or Want of *Anger* in the Subject?

Let only the *Cause* be sufficient to Warrant it, and the *Degree* of it be Proportionable, and the *Manner* not Offensive, and the *Duration* no longer than the Occasion, Whosoever is *Angry* within these Bounds cannot be said to *Want* Temper, but to be in *Due* Temper; and his *Anger* not to be *Culpable*, but *Virtuous* and *Laudable*.

But *Anger* shewn upon *Trifling* Occasions will *Lessen* Opinion, because it manifests a *Weakness* in Judgment, which apprehended That to be *Great* which was *Little*; and, if in a great *Degree*, a greater *Weakness*, forasmuch as the Judgment is still more *mistaken*. If express'd in *Language* contumelious, virulent, abusive, it will *Lessen* Opinion, because this is want of Temper, Temper Unbridled, Unrestrain'd by *due* Reflection, a great Failure in *Prudence*, a *Disgrace* to Liberal Education, wholly *Unnecessary* to any Virtuous Purpose, inducing a Belief of *Ill Will* to the Person, which no Man should bear to Any, rarely procuring *Amendment*, hardly admitting *Reconciliation*, which yet every Man must want to

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have brought about, who is either a *Prudent Man*, or a *Christian*.

If it be inquir'd What is a *Cause* of Anger, which in the *Servant* of the *Lord* will be allow'd to be *Just*; I Answer, That Conduct in the *Scoffer*, or the *Vicious*, which Opposes, Retards, or Hinders *Good*; or, in other Words, the *Success* of his *Ministration*.

The *Servant* of the *Lord*, if he be a *Good* and *Faithful* *Servant*, cannot but have the *Credit* and *Interest* of that Religion at Heart, which his *Master* came to Establish; cannot but use his utmost Diligence to bring it into *Repute*, and to *Propagate* it in the World; cannot but exceedingly *Rejoice*, if he hath but a rational and well-grounded *Hope*, that He is become an Instrument in the Hand of God for the Promoting of Piety and Virtue amongst Men; and be exceedingly *Griev'd*, as often as he finds himself Disappointed and Defeated in *This* View; and will therefore be *Justified* in the *Offence* he rightly takes, and in the *Resentment* he properly expresses against those, who, by their Irreligious and Immoral Conversation and Behaviour, by their Neglect or Contempt of Things Sacred or Serious, aim to render his Endeavours fruitless, and his Labours in the Service of his Lord Insignificant.

To Conclude, The *Servant* of the *Lord* must not *Strive*, or enter into the Discussion of *foolish* and *unlearned* Questions, such as have no Relation to his *Master's* Service, be-
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low his *Dignity*, as well as beside his *Purpose*. Nor yet, in the Disputes he may have with *Conscientious* Men differing from him in Opinion, must he defend the most *Important* Truths, in a *Contentious* Manner; for *the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of God*. Neither must he Intrude into the Sacred Office without being *Call'd* thereto by a *True Inclination* to the Office itself, founded in a *Consciousness* of the *Powers* proper to the due Discharge of it, let the Temporal Emolument thereto annex'd be, as it shall happen, Great or Small. Neither let him *Flatter* himself, that nothing more is requisite to *Convince* and *Reform* Men, than to *Know*, and to be *Able to Prove* to them, in a clear manner, what is to be *Believ'd* and *Practis'd*. This is Necessary, but it is not *All* that is so. Such a Regard to his *Own Character*, and such a Behaviour towards *Them*, is also Requir'd, as shall not fail to procure him their *Esteem*, and their *Affection*.

I do not pretend, that the *Ignorant*, or the *Obstinate*, or the *Immoral*, will always be *Reform'd* by the strongest Arguments, laid before them in the best Order, and press'd upon them in the most affectionate Manner, by the most unexceptionable Person. It is very well, if we have *Convinc'd* them of *Error*, and have not *Prejudic'd* them against the *Truth*. If the *Understanding* be once Enlightened, the *Will*, in time, may be Obedient. Having
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been Careful not to Offend Any, it is very likely we may Gain Some. *Events* are in the Hands of God, *Duty* in Ours. If at last, our Labour of Love should be lost to any of our unhappy *Flock*, it will not be lost to *Us*. And though we may not be Able to lead *Others* through the Paths of Virtue to Eternal Rest, yet shall we be sure to find the Way thither *Ourselves*, and each of us be receiv'd with *This* Commendation from our Heavenly Master; *Well done, thou good and faithful Servant! Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.*

F I N I S